



Is Executive Function Specifically Impaired in Children With Neurofibromatosis Type 1? A Neuropsychological Investigation of Cognitive Flexibility

Submitted by Emmanuel Lemoine on Wed, 04/22/2015 - 16:57

Titre	Is Executive Function Specifically Impaired in Children With Neurofibromatosis Type 1? A Neuropsychological Investigation of Cognitive Flexibility
Type de publication	Article de revue
Auteur	Roy, Arnaud [1], Barbarot, Sébastien [2], Roulin, Jean-Luc [3], Charbonnier, Valérie [4], Fasotti, Luciano [5], Stalder, Jean-François [6], Le Gall, Didier [7]
Editeur	Taylor & Francis (Routledge)
Type	Article scientifique dans une revue à comité de lecture
Année	2012
Langue	Anglais
Date	2012
Numéro	2
Pagination	94-102
Volume	3
Titre de la revue	Applied Neuropsychology: Child
ISSN	2162-2965
Résumé en anglais	Our study investigated spontaneous versus reactive cognitive flexibility in children with neurofibromatosis type 1 (NF1) and their comorbidity with attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Thirty children with NF1 aged 7 to 12 years old were compared to 60 healthy controls matched by age, gender, and parental education. On the basis of Eslinger and Grattan's definition (1993), spontaneous shifting was assessed using fluency tests, whereas reactive flexibility was measured by a child adaptation of the Modified Card-Sorting Test and the Brixton Test. IQ and basic skills were taken into account as confounding variables that might influence executive measures. NF1 children performed below the level of healthy children on both reactive flexibility tasks, even when intelligence and basic skills were partialled out, but ADHD symptomatology was not found to adversely affect the performance of patients. Our findings support the hypothesis of a specific executive impairment in NF1, uncovering a dissociation between (impaired) reactive flexibility and (preserved) spontaneous shifting, with no impact of ADHD on executive performance.
URL de la notice	http://okina.univ-angers.fr/publications/ua10239 [8]
DOI	10.1080/21622965.2012.704185 [9]
Lien vers le document	http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/21622965.2012.704185 [9]

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